

HONORING SUPERVISOR MEL
VARRELMAN UPON HIS RETIRE-
MENT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mel Varrelman as he retires from the Napa County Board of Supervisors. Mel's tenure as a Napa County Supervisor is a model for all those who are in public office and for all those who value community service.

During my service in Congress and the California State Senate, I have consistently turned to Mel for advice, assistance, and friendship. Since Mel was first elected to the St. Helena City Council in 1976 and then to the Board of Supervisors in 1982, he has represented his district, which includes my home in St. Helena, with sincerity, pragmatism and vision. Whether being on the winning side or the losing side of votes, Mel always cast his vote in the way he believed would improve the lives of his constituents. He has repeatedly demonstrated that true leadership often requires taking an unpopular position before time is eventually allowed to prove its benefits to all.

Mel shares a passion for agriculture and open space, particularly in the Napa Valley. Mel's steadfast commitment to the preservation of open space and agricultural lands in Napa County has allowed our Valley to remain as both an economic engine for the region and as one of the most beautiful places in the country. During his tenure, Mel helped enact measures including a landmark plan to require a vote of the people to rezone land, a hillside ordinance, a 160-acre minimum parcel requirement for agriculture, watershed and open space lands, a groundwater ordinance and a watershed ordinance.

As a private citizen, Mel has also contributed to the well being of those in our community. As an accountant and certified financial planner, he has helped individuals and small businesses navigate the tax code and the confusing world of finance. I often seek Mel's analysis of how national tax and fiscal policy will affect the lives of the hardworking people of the First Congressional District.

In addition to serving on the Board of Supervisors, Mel also serves on the Napa County Emergency Medical Care Committee, the Upper Valley Waste Management Agency, the Napa County Transportation Planning Agency, the Local Agency Formation Commission and the Government Finance Committee of the California State Association of Counties.

Mel lives in my hometown of St. Helena with his wife, Rose. They have two great children and are wonderful neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored today to recognize Napa County Supervisor and my friend Mel Varrelman for his tremendous contributions to the Napa Valley and its residents. Even as Mel retires as the District 3 Supervisor, I am confident that he will continue to provide leadership in Napa County for many years to come.

RECOGNITION OF VINCENT
KRASINSKI

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Vincent Krasinski, a highly respected and influential member of the Glaziers Local Union 1087 who recently announced his retirement. In his 32 years as a member, Vincent was a leading voice for labor in Nassau and Suffolk County, and New York City. He joined the union in 1970 and quickly became a leader. First, he was elected to the LU 1087 executive board in 1979 and then being elected in 1987 as a Business Agent for LU 1087.

Vincent proudly served his country in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War from 1969 to 1970. Upon returning from his tour of duty he married Jennifer, his wife of almost 33 years. They have two wonderful children, Jennifer and Laurie, and are the proud grandparents of Vincent, Alyssia, Chloe and Casey.

While serving as a member of the union's executive board, and raising a family, Vincent still found time to work on many political campaigns for labor friendly candidates. I am proud to say I am one of them. He has volunteered his time for the St. Francis Hospital Heart Center in Roslyn, New York and currently sits on Bob Gaffney's Labor Advisory Board.

Vincent Krasinski is responsible for the current strength of LU 1087. He leaves behind a strong legacy and is a good example of the difference one person can make. I applaud Vincent for his dedication to our community and thank him on behalf of the people of not only for the 4th Congressional District, but the rest of Nassau and Suffolk County and New York City who benefitted from his hard work and commitment.

IN SUPPORT OF THE LOW-INCOME
HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE EQ-
UITY ACT OF 2002

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) Equity Act of 2002. Most people associate LIHEAP with home heating assistance to needy families in the wintertime, and that is an extremely important purpose of the program. However, while many people are in danger each year because they cannot afford to properly heat their homes, many across the South but also all over the country are in danger every year because they cannot afford to cool their homes.

I am introducing this legislation to bring parity to the LIHEAP program between regions that are more likely to use LIHEAP for heating and for cooling. My hometown of Houston can see many consecutive days of above 100 degree temperatures, combined with high humidity. This is a potentially lethal combination for the poor, often elderly, residents who cannot

afford an air conditioner or afford to pay the electricity bill. In addition, the Northern part of the country sees too many preventable heat related deaths.

According to the National Weather Service, heat related deaths and injuries far outpaced cold related deaths and injuries. In 2000, there were 158 heat related deaths and 26 cold related deaths. In addition, there were over 400 heat related injuries also in 2000. In 2001, the difference was even more pronounced with 166 heat related fatalities and 4 cold related fatalities.

It is time Congress and the LIHEAP program recognize the dangerous reality the heat waves pose in this country and begin to offer residents in danger from hot weather as much energy assistance as we offer to residents in danger from cold weather. Let us work together to bring some equity to LIHEAP and prevent more, senseless, fatalities of the elderly, infirm, and children who cannot afford air conditioning. I urge my colleagues to support the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP) Equity Act of 2002.

BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I fulfill the pledge I made to the citizens of southern Missouri to introduce and work tirelessly to pass an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, that requires a balanced Federal budget. Over the course of the past several decades, fiscal irresponsibility has produced a Federal debt that is fast approaching \$5 trillion. That's trillion, with a 't,' Mr. Speaker. A debt of \$5 trillion is a mind-boggling figure, but it can be placed in a much clearer perspective. A child born today immediately inherits nearly \$20,000 of debt, owed directly to Uncle Sam. The same is true for every American. The era of continuing annual budget deficits must end, and it is clear that the only way to restore conservative fiscal values to the Nation's budget is to pass the balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

The stakes in this debate could not be more important. The fiscal future of the United States hinges on the ability of Congress and the President to make the difficult choices required to balance the Federal budget. It's more than debating trillion dollar figures. It's about making our economy stronger and providing every working American family with a better chance to make ends meet. A balanced budget will strengthen every sector of our economy with lower interest rates that will help families stretch each paycheck further. Home mortgages, automobiles, and a better education will become more affordable to every working family, making the American Dream closer to reality for all.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to working with my colleagues in the new Congress to see that the balanced budget constitutional amendment is passed and sent to the States for ratification. A constitutional amendment is certainly no substitute for direct action on the part of the Congress. However, we have seen time and time again instances where those who object to conservative fiscal responsibility

find convenient excuses to deny the American people a balanced budget. An unbreakable enforcement mechanism is clearly needed to ensure that those who would continue to spend our children's future further into debt are not able to do so.

I also want to make plain that the Social Security trust fund has no place in this debate. The independent trust fund is a sacred trust between generations and must never be used to balance the budget or hide the true size of the deficit.

Commonsense conservatives in Congress and the American people are committed to balancing the budget. I look forward to working throughout this session with all of my colleagues and the White House to pass the balanced budget constitutional amendment on a bipartisan basis. The obligations we owe to hard working American families, their children, and our Nation's future generations deserve nothing less than decisive action to preserve our future by balancing the budget. A constitutional amendment will ensure this outcome.

HONORING THE RETIREMENT OF
SAN LEANDRO CITY COUNCIL-
MEMBER GARRY LOEFFLER

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize San Leandro City Councilmember Garry Loeffler on his retirement after 8 years of distinguished service on the Council and a lifetime of leadership in the San Leandro Unified School District.

First elected to the City Council in 1994, Loeffler has served on many committees dedicated to improving the city, including Disaster Council, Rules and Communications, School Liaison, Finance, Human Relations, and Facilities.

He is a strong supporter of the Seniors Commission, and a founding member of the San Leandro Collaborative for Families and Youth. Beyond the Council, Loeffler is active on regional groups including the Association of Bay Area Governments and the League of California Cities.

Dedicated to education, Loeffler was Principal or Vice-Principal of six of San Leandro's eight elementary schools during his 33-year career in education. Prior to his teaching career, he served active duty in the Army from 1963 until 1965. He remained in the Army Reserves until 1983, retiring as Lieutenant Colonel.

I am honored to congratulate Garry Loeffler on his retirement. The City of San Leandro is a better place today thanks to his years of dedicated service.

RECOGNITION OF CARLO
CARRIERE

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Carlo Carriere, a highly

respected and influential member of the Glaziers local Union 1087 who recently announced his retirement. In his 32 years as a member, Carlo was a leading voice for labor. He joined the union as an apprentice in 1970 and quickly became a leader.

Carlo proudly served his country in the United States Army from 1966 to 1968 where he attained the rank of Staff Sergeant. After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, he again served his country by leading a contingent of Glaziers in rescue and clean up of the World Trade Center site.

As a member of LU 1087, Carlo was elected District Council Delegate in 1973 and just three years later was elected to the Executive Board in 1976. He continued his accession in 1982 when he was elected as Vice President of the LU 1087. During his tenure as Vice President Carlo, became a Business Representative and was elected Chairman of the National Glaziers and Glass Workers Apprenticeship Program in 1990. He also served as a Trustee to the Union Funds beginning in 1986. In 1995 he was elected Business Manager of LU 1087. Just one year later, upon the full affiliation of LU 1087 with District Council 9, Carlo was appointed Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

Carlo Carriere is responsible for the current strength of LU 1087. He leaves behind a strong legacy and is a good example of the difference one person can make. I applaud Carlo for his dedication to our community, and thank him on behalf of the people of the 4th Congressional District who have benefitted from his hard work and commitment.

INTRODUCTION OF THE KEEPING
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SAFE
ACT OF 2003

HON. PETER HOEKSTRA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, today I introduce the "Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003" to reauthorize the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA), the Adoption Opportunities program, the Abandoned Infants Act, and the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA).

Unfortunately, last Congress the House and Senate were unable to reach agreement on all issues pertaining to the reauthorization of CAPTA and its related programs and acts. The bill I am introducing today once again puts forth our bipartisan effort and ongoing commitment to ensuring that programs aimed at the prevention of child abuse and neglect continue.

The Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 supports the continued provision of important federal resources for identifying and addressing the issues of child abuse and neglect, and supports effective methods of prevention and treatment. It also continues local projects with demonstrated value in eliminating barriers to permanent adoption and in addressing the circumstances that often lead to infant abandonment.

This bill emphasizes the prevention of child abuse and neglect before it occurs. It retains language promoting partnerships between child protective services and private and com-

munity-based organizations to ensure that services are more effectively provided, and retains important language supporting public education on child abuse and neglect by strengthening the public's understanding of the role of the child protection system and appropriate methods for public reporting of suspected incidents of child maltreatment.

This bill also continues to foster cooperation between parents and child protective services workers by requiring case workers to inform parents of the allegations made against them, and improves the training opportunities and requirements for child protective services personnel regarding the extent and limits of their legal authority and the legal rights of parents and guardians.

Lastly, this bill ensures the safety of foster and adoptive children by requiring states to conduct criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to back this important bipartisan legislation that supports improved services for children and families in the prevention and treatment of child abuse, neglect and family violence.

DESIGNATING "GOD BLESS AMERICA"
AS OUR NATIONAL HYMN

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reintroduce a simple piece of legislation that will provide all Americans with another important national symbol which they can lean on during times of national stress. The legislation will designate "God Bless America" as our National Hymn. The first words of this song, "God Bless America, land that I love," say it all. They are simple, direct, and they truly reflect the spirit of our country during this latest challenge.

Although nothing can surpass the importance or meaning of the "Star Spangled Banner" as our preeminent national anthem, "God Bless America" is almost always the second song our citizens fall to in times of great national tragedy. America's unofficial national anthem was composed by Irving Berlin, an immigrant who left Siberia for America when he was only five years old.

While originally written for a musical in 1918, Berlin realized that this was more than a light-hearted musical number. So he set it aside for a more appropriate time. That time came shortly before the Second World War. Berlin released "God Bless America" in November of 1938.

As the nation prepared to enter World War II, it was evident that the whole country—from the mountains, to the prairies, to the oceans white with foam—would need to stay strong, to protect our home sweet home.

"God Bless America" unified all Americans with its simple sentiment, and it unifies us again today.

This song is the heart and soul of our country, and we should honor it by designating it as our National Hymn.

Thank you Mr. Speaker.